

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants request favorable reconsideration of this application.

Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 13, 15, and 16 are now pending in this application, with Claims 1 and 16 being independent. By this Amendment, Applicants have amended Claim 1. No new matter has been added. Support for this amendment to Claim 1 is found at least at paragraph [0034] and in Figure 3 of the present application.

Claims 1, 2, 4-10, 13, 15, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,392,755 (Levecq).

Amended independent Claim 1 recites, in part, at least three optical blocks, an imaging element for picking up object images formed by the optical blocks in imaging ranges provided for each optical block, and a shielding member which prevents light from each optical block from reaching an imaging range other than the imaging range corresponding to each optical block. Claim 1 also recites that optical axes of the optical blocks intersect each other.

Independent Claim 16 recites, in part, a plurality of optical blocks, and an imaging element for picking-up object images formed by the optical blocks in imaging ranges provided for each optical block, wherein optical axes of the optical blocks intersect each other on the object side.

In contrast, the Levecq patent is understood to show light rays emitted from a light source 4 and projected onto optical system 10, and an optical axis 9 of a receiving system, as shown on the attached annotated copy of Figure 2 of this patent. But this patent is not understood to disclose or suggest that optical axes of optical blocks intersect each other, as

recited by amended Claim 1, or that optical axes of optical blocks intersect each other on the object side, as recited by Claim 16.

Page 3 of the Office Action, in asserting that these features are shown in Figure 2 of this patent, states “one of the optical axes 9 and 10 of the optical system 10 is intersected each other at object 4”. But, while reference numeral 9 denotes an optical axis of a receiving system, reference numeral 10 does not, and reference numeral 4 does not denote an object. Reference numeral 10 denotes an optical shaping system, while reference numeral 4 denotes a light source. As a result, the Office Action has not specified two optical axes of two different optical blocks that intersect each other in Figure 2. Therefore, the Office Action is not understood to have satisfied its burden of proof to establish anticipation of Claims 1 and 16 over the Levecq patent.

In addition, the Levecq patent is not understood to disclose or suggest a shielding member which prevents light from each optical block from reaching an imaging range other than the imaging range corresponding to each optical block, as recited by amended Claim 1.

Since the Levecq patent is understood to fail to show at least two features of amended Claim 1, and at least one feature of Claim 16, Applicants submit that these claims are not anticipated by the Levecq patent. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims over the Levecq patent be withdrawn.

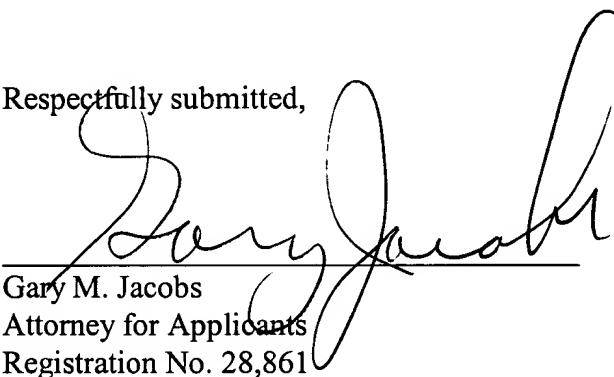
The remaining claims in this application are dependent claims which depend from independent Claim 1. Applicants submit that the dependent claims are allowable for the reasons set forth above with respect to that independent claim. In addition, those dependent claims recite additional features that further distinguish them from the cited patent documents. Applicants request favorable and independent consideration of the dependent claims.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102, and allowance of this application.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. At the very least, the changes presented herein reduce the number of issues on appeal. Therefore, Applicants request entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Jacobs", is written over a horizontal line.

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